

C H E



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"TO WAKE THE SOUL BY TENDER STROKES OF ART,—TO RAISE THE GENIUS AND TO MEND THE HEART."

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1805.

NOVELIST.

AMANDA:—A TALE.

[Concluded from Page 166.]

THE perusal of this letter, for some moments, deprived me of the power of feeling the extent of my own misery:—but recollection soon returned, and with it such a load of sorrow, as would have crushed a frame less strong than mine; yet, spite of all the wrongs I had sustained, the false Alphonso still possessed my heart!

"The tale, I fancied, might be false: a sudden joy illumined my tortured breast, and I resolved to know at once my doom. A small bribe to the servant in the family induced him to procure me a carriage, which I ordered him to have in waiting at the end of the street; and sending for the nurse, who had the care of this precious infant, I informed her I wished to have him a few hours to amuse me; and, the moment she had committed him to my care, I escaped at a back door, and jumped into the carriage, and every moment that detains me from pursuing my journey, I consider as a drawback on my peace and happiness."

Fitzowen listened to the interesting tale with a mixture of astonishment, pity, and contempt; and, whilst his honest heart swelled with indignation against the destroyer of Amanda's repose, his friendship induced him to dissuade her against pursuing her journey; and, in the strongest terms, he conjured her to return to that hospitable abode which she had so imprudently forsaken, and by a frank disclosure of Alphonso's iniquity, deprecate that resentment which her own 'duplicity, in all probability, had excited.

"Ah!—no!" said the agonized Amanda—"Never—never shall I behold that dear, deceived relation more!—How could I bear to meet those

eyes, which used to beam with love and fondness, viewing me with coldness, anger, or with scorn? How could I meet the censuring voice of her, whose partial praise was wont to charm my ear? Could I endure the silent scorn of those who once were proud to own me as a friend? Or could I give a form, no longer pure, to him whose virtues claim a spotless wife? Alas! my friend, I feel myself so fallen!—that solitude must now seclude my shame!"

Fitzowen again urged her to return, pointing out the impropriety of her conduct: but though she acknowledged that she had very little doubt of Alphonso's falsehood, yet she was resolved to hear it from himself and enjoy the poor satisfaction of upbraiding him with treachery.

The humane Fitzowen, commiserating her situation, and lamenting her fate, generously offered to become her companion; and the unfortunate girl, cheered by the tender sympathy she had inspired, found her sorrows heightened by being shared.

Whilst Fitzowen was endeavoring to soothe the dejection of his unfortunate guest's mind, his amiable wife was busily occupied in preparing some refreshment for her body, whilst the lovely babe, who was the source of her distress, lay sweetly slumbering in her arms.

As the surgeon lived at some distance, the servant did not return until it was quite dark; and the postillion was so much recovered before his arrival, that Fitzowen thought his assistance almost unnecessary, as he had only been stunned by the violence of the blow, and it was thought he would be able to proceed in the morning.

As the hospitable inhabitants of this little cottage occupied their best apart-

ment, they insisted upon resigning it to Amanda, whilst another was prepared for themselves on the same floor with the servant; and Fitzowen proposed that they should pursue their journey on the following morning at five o'clock.

The perturbed state of Amanda's mind prevented her from enjoying the comfort of repose; and, rising from her uneasy couch at the break of day, she impatiently waited the hour which had previously been destined for her departure. In this anxious state of suspense and expectation, the image of her benefactress presented itself to her mind, in all the anguish of fear and apprehension for the fate of one, whom she had always loved with a fondness equal to that of a parent.

That she should have quitted the roof of her amiable protectress, without even a line to shield her bosom from suspense, or to spare her heart the pang of apprehension, appeared a crime of no less enormity than her having attempted to impose upon her confidence and tenderness. Eager to compensate for such a want of feeling, and desirous to relieve expectation and anxiety, she instantly opened the chamber door, and descended softly to the little room she had supped in, took possession of an inkstand that she had observed upon the table, and, with a heart throbbing with expectation and contrition, addressed to Mrs. Darnley the following epistle:

"TO MRS. DARNLEY.

"IN what strain of humiliation, in what language of regret, shall I presume to address my offended benefactress? Or how shall I be able to convince her mind of the sorrow and contrition which prey upon my own?

"Reared with fondness, cherished with affection, and laden with obliga-

tions!—How have I returned such wondrous kindness?—by cool deception, and refined duplicity!—Oh, my friend!—my more than mother!—prostrate on my knees I implore forgiveness—implore you to pardon the child of your affection—and to believe that, at the moment I resigned my hand to the destroyer of my peace—even at the sacred altar where I vowed him eternal fidelity—my heart reproached me with ingratitude to her, to whom I owed tenderness, duty, and veneration!

“Think not, my dearest, best of friends, that I mean basely to shield myself from censure, by describing the pains that were taken to wean me from my duty, or the arts which were practised to destroy that high sense of rectitude which your precepts had inspired. I ought to have known, that the man who could instil sentiments of deception into the mind of an artless and attached young woman, would be the first to practise them upon herself. Yes—false, ungrateful Alphonso, too dearly hast thou made her suffer for her credulity!—too deeply hast thou wounded her by thy artifice! Alas! my beloved aunt, my peace is lost for ever! Oh! then, in pity to my suffering, do not I conjure you, do not say—you hate me!—Give me the only one surviving comfort that remains, and bless me with the sound of pardon!

The amiable being whom you had destined for my protector, at his return, will tell you my sad tale—tell you how basely I was used, how cruelly deceived—for I, alas! must never see you more! In penitence I mean to pass my days, far from the objects of my former bliss; for never could I bear the glance of Censure, or the tongue of Blame! I go, my friend, to hear my shame pronounced—to hear the faithless object of my partial fondness avow his infamy, and my disgrace, and claim his pity for my helpless child!

“Adieu, my loved, my valued, and only friend. I now see the carriage preparing which is to bear me to the base destroyer of my peace, and every moment is precious. May Heaven, and you forgive the wretched and forlorn

“AMANDA.”

With this penitent epistle the maid servant was dispatched to the neighbouring town the moment Fitzowen and his unfortunate companion drove from the door; and Amanda's heart felt sen-

sibly lightened by this act of duty and attention to her amiable relation.

The travellers pursued their way without any farther interruption, or any material occurrence, until the arrived at the Eagle and Child at Holyhead, when the agitation of Amanda's spirits became so violent, that the humane Fitzowen was absolutely obliged to support her in his arms to a bed, which was immediately prepared for her reception, whilst the infant was placed under the protection of the officious landlady.

Whilst Amanda in vain endeavoured to compose her feelings, and prepare her mind for the dreaded interview, Fitzowen was making inquiries after the state of Alphonso's health, and was informed that he had so far recovered from his wound as to be able to join the society of his friends, though the surgeon had prohibited the use of wine.—This restriction, though represented as absolutely necessary, the head-strong Alphonso refused to regard; and, instead of adhering to the regimen prescribed, drank even to intoxication.—The wound, which was healing, soon inflamed, and in less than two days he was pronounced past recovery; but at the moment of Amanda's arrival he was supposed only to have a few hours to live.

No sooner had Fitzowen heard this intelligence, than he repaired to Amanda's apartment, and in the most cautious terms disclosed the fatal news.—Anger and resentment immediately fled from her bosom, and, starting from her couch in an agony of despair, she requested to be instantly conducted to his chamber.

Fitzowen represented the consequences that might result from rushing unprepared into his presence, and entreated her to let him send for the physician, who was at that moment waiting in Alphonso's apartment, for the purpose of requesting him to prepare his patient for so unexpected and interesting an interview.

The agitated Amanda immediately consented, but entreated that no unnecessary delay might separate her from the object of her solicitude, during the few hours that remained of life; and her humane companion, anxious to promote her wishes, returned in less than a quarter of an hour, to inform her that Alphonso was prepared to see her.

With fearful steps and palpitating heart the ill-fated girl approached the chamber; but when she beheld the emaciated form of him on whom she doated, both strength and resolution failed, and, uttering a shrill alarming shriek she sunk into the arms of the physician. Volatile restoratives were successfully applied, and in a few moments her recollection returned; and finding she had been conveyed in to another apartment, she insisted upon being permitted to re-enter Alphonso's, promising to support herself with greater firmness.

During her absence, the dying man had requested to be moved from the bed to the sofa, conceiving she would not think his end so near, if she saw that he was able to be taken out of bed.

“Is my person terrifying, my Amanda?” said he, in a low, hollow voice, as she re-entered, at the same time stretching out his enfeebled hand.

“O, no!” was all the wretched girl could utter; and throwing herself on her knees by the side of the sofa, she sobbed aloud, with anguish.

“My love, my life, my dearest, injured girl,” sighed out the dying man, “I merit not this sad display of tenderness—Oh, Amanda!—lovely, lost Amanda!—I am a villain!—a base, deceiving villain!—and you must hate me.”

“Hate you, Alphonso!” exclaimed the ill-fated Amanda—“Alas! too well I love you!”

“I have a wife,” said he—“a poor, forsaken wife!—forlorn and wretched as yourself!—Didst thou know that, Amanda?”

“Too well I know it—Too well I know, likewise, thou hast a son!”

“Sins!—more sins!” echoed he, trembling with inward apprehension at the thought—“Oh, teach him not to curse his father's name!—yet teach him to detest his father's vices!—Oh! Amanda!” continued he, pressing her with fondness to his heart—“thy sufferings are more torturing than death!—Oh! had I never seen that lovely face, then might my crimes have hoped for pardon;—but now—ah! now I feel—I am lost for ever!”

The conflict of his feelings here totally overpowered him, and, throwing his head upon the bosom of Amanda,

he sighed forth her name, and instantly expired.

I shall silently pass over the melancholy scene that followed, and merely say, that Amanda refused to leave the inn until after the interment of Alphonso's body, when her humane companion reconducted her to his hospitable abode, where she found a letter from the amiable Mrs. Darnley, assuring her of forgiveness, and intreating her to return immediately to her arms, which would always be ready and open to receive her.

This letter was soon followed by a visit from Mr. Forbes, who in vain pleaded the strength of his attachment, for Amanda remained fixed in her former resolution, and would neither accept his hand, nor quit her retirement; telling him, that as her conduct had lost her the esteem of her own heart, she could never expect to be blest with his; and therefore she was resolved to devote her days to penitence!

AMUSING.

FASHION.

THE influence of fashion is visible in the most trifling objects, and pervades even the minutest occurrences of life, we see it whithersoever we go, and feel it in all our commerce with the world. It is a tyrant, whose capricious dictates we are obliged to obey, and whose chains, however heavy, we dare not throw off. Whether we dress, dance, or salute our acquaintance, we must comply with the prevailing fashion, and conduct ourselves, in the performance of these operations, according to the reigning mode.

Fashion is in no article more capricious than in that of dress. At one period, tight clothes and starched cravats are all the rage, and we limp into the drawing-room, to pay our respects to the ladies, with our feet squeezed up into narrow-toed shoes, and under momentary apprehensions of suffocation, from the tightness of our collar. At another, the broad-backed coat hangs about us like a sailor's fear-nought, our pudding-stuffed neckcloth, loosely tied, and projecting, forms a pillow for the chin, (inspiring in strangers a suspicion that we are afflicted, in those parts, with more biles than Job,) while the square-toed machines, in fashion among our ancestors two cen-

turies since, envelope our feet. Now toupee, frized broad and high, and white as a cauliflower, is all the vogue; and now we scud under bare poles, like a vessel in a storm, with our unpowdered hair, cropt as close as a French Sansculotte, or a puritan of the 16th century. Nor are the fair sex less distinguished by the vicissitudes of dress. In ancient times, the brocade, stuffed with buckram, covered the person, still farther protected by the enormous hoop, that sevenfold fence of female virtue, as Pope calls it, while the ruff guarded the neck, and the modest handkerchief concealed the undulations of the bosom. These incumbrances were gradually laid aside, and "the naked nature, and the living grace," seem now the order of the day. Our lovely belles, more honest and independent than their grandmothers, are desirous of appearing as nature made them, studious of displaying every beauty, and careless of concealing any defect. Clad in transparent muslin, when clad at all, they at once court and gratify the curiosity of the spectator.—Whether this be true policy, is left to the consideration of the ladies, who may prudently consider, if more might not be left to the imagination, since what is common and visible is generally less prized, than what is more carefully concealed from the eye of observation.

An ancient belle was admired in proportion to the starchness of her dress, and reserve and formality of her manners. A modern one courts admiration by the charms of an exposed neck, and two red elbows; by volubility of tongue, and a certain well-bred assurance of behaviour. A beau of former times was attentive to his person and carriage, cultivated an imposing dignity of manners, and considered the propriety of dress as a letter of recommendation. At present, it is difficult to distinguish a gentleman from his servant, by his exterior, except that the latter is sometimes powdered, and so far has the advantage of his master, in point of gentility. A round head, a whiskered face, a swaggering gait, and an enormous bludgeon, now characterize the well-bred gentleman, who a few years since would infallibly have been mistaken for a foot-pad.

With regard to dancing, vulgarity has proved equally successful. The Scotch step, the Irish shuffle, and the

Partridge waddle, have triumphed over the graceful minuet, and the elegant cotillion. A strange rage for imitating low life seems to be the epidemical malady of the age.

Nor is the caprice of fashion less visible in our mode of salutation. The good old custom of shaking hands seems fast declining, and we are now presented with one, two, three or more fingers.

The origin of this finger salutation I have endeavoured to trace, and have discovered that it proceeded from some popular generals, who, having lost several fingers in the service of their country, owned not a whole hand to present. As I am a strong advocate for distinctions, fully sensible of their utility in society, I am determined, in future, to observe them in my mode of performing this manual exercise. With my dearest friends I shall cordially shake hands; to my intimates present four fingers, to common acquaintances three, two to those who are slightly known, one to doubtful characters, and a formal bow to an entire stranger. I think, if this mode was adopted by the public, it would be attended with important advantages, as from the present unsettled laws of salutation, many serious misunderstandings have arisen, and I have known a considerable coolness take place between friends from neglect, or inadvertance, in returning a bow.

SELECT LESSONS OF WISDOM.

Every man has something good in his composition, which may be much improved by cultivation and diligence.

Procrastination in well-grounded love, as well as in other affairs of life, is generally imprudent, and often ends in loss, disappointment and repentance.

Precipitation often ruins the best laid designs, while patience ripens the most difficult.

Clearness is the rule of speaking, as sincerity is the rule of thinking. Too bright sallies of wit, like flashes of lightning, rather dazzle than illuminate.

The reverse of solitude is not a multitude of people, but the society we love.

A CARD.

THOSE persons who have borrowed Books from the subscriber, are earnestly requested to return them as soon as possible, as he intends shortly to remove from this borough.

JOHN BRADBURN.

POETRY.

[The following Fable, by Dr. Aiken, one of the purest and sweetest of living English writers, will be read with pleasure, by all who have a taste for good sense, and easy, unaffected expression.]

THE GOLDFINCH AND LINNET.

A GAUDY Goldfinch, pert and gay,
Hopping blithe from spray to spray,
Full of frolic, full of spring,
With head well plum'd, and burnish'd wing,
Spied a sober Linnet hen,
Sitting all alone,
And bow'd and chirp'd, and bow'd again,
And, with familiar tone,
He thus the dame address'd,
As to her side he closely prest.

I hope, my dear, I don't intrude,
By breaking on your solitude ;
But it has always been my passion,
To forward pleasant conversation ;
And I should be a stupid bird
To pass the fair without a word ;
I, who have been forever noted,
To be the sex's most devoted ;
Besides, a damsel unattended,
Left unnoticed, and unfriended,
Appears, excuse me, so forlorn,
That I can scarce suppose,
By any she that e'er was born,
'Twould be the thing she chose.
How happy then I'm now at leisure
To wait upon a lady's pleasure ;
And all this morn have nought to do,
But pay my duty, love, to you.

What, silent ! ah those looks demure,
And eyes of langour, make me sure
That, in my random, idle clatter,
I quite mistook the matter :
It is not spleen, nor contemplation,
That draws you to the cover ;
But 'tis some tender assignation ;
Well !---who's the favor'd lover ?
I met hard by in quaker suit,
A youth sedately grave and mute ;
And, from the maxim like to like,
Perhaps, the *sober youth* might strike ;
Yes, yes, 'tis he, I'll lay my life,
Who hopes to get you for a wife.

But come, my dear, I know you're wise,
Compare and judge, and use your eyes.
No female yet could e'er behold
The lustre of my red and gold,
My ivory bill and jetty crest,
But all was o'er, and I was blest.
Come, brighten up, and act with spirit,
And take the fortune that you merit.

He ceas'd—Linetta thus replied,
With cold contempt and decent pride,
'Tis pity, sir, a youth so sweet,
In form and manners so complete,

Should do an humble maid the honor
To waste his precious time upon her.
A poor forsaken she, you know,
Can do no credit to a beau ;
And worse would be the case,
If, meeting one, whose faith was plighted,
He should incur the sad disgrace
Of being slighted.

Now, sir, the *sober suited youth*,
Whom you were pleas'd to mention,
To those small merits, sense and truth,
And generous love, has some pretension ;
And then, to give him all his due,
He sings, sir, full as well as you,
And sometimes can be silent too.
In short, my taste is so perverse,
And such my wayward fate,
That it would be my greatest curse
To have a coxcomb to my mate.

This said, away she scuds,
And leaves beau Goldfinch in the suds.

ODE TO SPRING.

WELCOME, sweet season of delight !
What beauties charm the wond'ring sight,
In thy enchanting reign !

How fresh descends the morning dew,
Whilst op'ning flow'rs of various hue
Bedeck the sprightly plain.

The artless warblers of the grove
Again unite in songs of love,
To bless thy kind return :
But first the lark, who soaring seems
To hail the orb of day, whose beams
With fresh resplendence burn.

The limped brook that purls along,
The tuneful blackbird's joyous song,
The softly-whisp'ring breeze ;
The mossy hills which now invite,
These with the verdant meads unite,
Th' elated mind to please.

The mind with thoughts of good possest,
With innocence and virtue blest,
Untaught in vice's way ;
May taste those joys by nature giv'n,
May lift th' enraptur'd eye to Heav'n,
And their great Author praise.

Stern Winter's gloomy season past,
We see fair Spring advances fast,
With Summer in the rear :
Soon Autumn's shades will interpose,
And a succeeding Winter close
The swift revolving year.

Of human life an emblem true,
The early morn of youth we view,
In Spring's delightful face :
Meridian life's a Summer's day—
With Autumn fades—its quick decay,
In Winter's blast we trace.

Then let us prize each fleeting hour,
Improve the moments in our pow'r—
E'er time shall cease to be :

Then shall our spirits, taking wing,
Be crown'd with an eternal Spring,
From Wintry storms set free.

ANTICIPATION.

THE short-liv'd comforts nature gives,
Seems made but to deceive us ;
For, though they yeild a transient joy,
We're wretched when they leave us.

Thus swiftly joy and woe succeed,
With true and certain measure ;
What gives us sorrow when 'tis past,
In prospect is our pleasure.

The present scarce a thought employs,
Or with one good supplies us—
'Tis perfect happiness we seek,
This always she denies us.

With her we never are content ;
But future pleasure viewing,
And though 'tis nothing when posses'd,
'Tis something when pursuing,

The future ev'ry wish employs,
Keeps hope in constant action,
Of this depriv'd we soon should be
Unhappy to distraction.

We think the future stor'd with bliss,
And all that can delight us,
And view her stand with open arms
To welcome and invite us.

In her we trust, on her we live,
Nor let the present bless us ;
But when the future does arrive,
'Twill equally distress us.

My Lord Coke's celebrated distich, directing a Law Student's disposition of Time, was thus translated by Sir W. Jones.

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Four spend in prayer—the rest on nature fix.

RATHER

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